put core sector on a robust footing through a wide range of policies, programmes and projects.

(c) to (e) NTPC, ONGC, IOC, BPCL, HPCL, GAIL, CIL, SAIL, RINL are some identified Central Public Sector Enterprises. This is not exhaustive listing as others are free to invest in core sector subject to sectoral guidelines.

Irrigation is an extremely important component of rural infrastructure for which a Committee has been set up. National Common Minimum Programme has identified irrigation as one of the areas of highest priority. The Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme has been assisting the State Governments in completing 'last mile' irrigation projects. The budget for this programme has been substantially increased from Rs. 2800 crore in 2004-05 to Rs. 4800 crore in 2005-06. A Pilot Scheme for repair, renovation and restoration of water bodies has been approved and Rs. 100 crore has been provided in 2005-06. To improve water use efficiency in agriculture, micro irrigation is being promoted and Rs. 400 crore has been provided for this in 2005-06.

The mid-term appraisal of the Tenth Five Year Plan is going into reforms in some of the core-sector areas, *viz.,* coal, railways and power.

Lowering of Access Deficit Charges

*234. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Competent Authority lowered Access Deficit Charges (ADC) and increased call charges of public call offices (PCOs) during the year 2004-2005;

(b) if so, details including payment received by BSNL due to ADC charges for last three years, year-wise and category-wise;

(c) if so, the expected revenue loss to BSNL due to lowering of ADC;

(d) the expected revenue from increase of call charges from PCOs;

(e) whether many private operators have to pay dues to BSNL on ADC charges; and

(f) if so, the details including amount of charges yet to be received from private parties?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHIMARAN): (a) to (f) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has reduced the Access Deficit Charges (ADC) in rupees per minute applicable for various types of calls *i.e.* ADC rates -v/de its IUC Regulation dated 6.1.2005, which has been implemented w.e.f. 1.2.2005.

The Overall ADC amount for the fixed line operators has not been reduced. All the fixed line operators have been provided ADC funds of the same order specified under the earlier regime of 29th October, 2003 which was applicable from 1.2.2004 to 31.1.2005. There has been reduction in ADC per minute rates. This has become possible as result of subscriber growth especially in Mobile segment and resultant increases in the minutes that fund the ADC.

TRAI has forborne tariffs for basic services (except rural fixed lines) and cellular mobile service (except national roaming service). The operators have been given the flexibility to offer tariffs subject to certain regulatory principles.

Further Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has informed that reduction in ADC has no relation with the rationalization of call charges of Public Call Office by BSNL during 2004-05 made effective from 1.1.2005 and no increase in net revenue is expected therefrom.

BSNL and MTNL stated that the figures of actual traffic could be supplied in the prescribed formats only after the completion of Call Data Record (CDR) based billing in their respective networks, BSNL was not measuring Intra Network minutes that would be required for notional ADC retained by BSNL. In this regard, TRAI *vide* its letter dated 20.1.2004 asked BSNL to measure Intra Network minutes. However, BSNL has not yet provided TRAI with the information citing technical limitations in this regard. As a result, the actual figures of total ADC collected after the IUC Regulation came into place are not available.

According to TRAI, the amount of ADC to be provided to BSNL is estimated to be around Rs. 2348 crores for a period of six months from February to July 2005. The ADC forecast figures for full year estimated

to be Rs. 4954 crores for BSNL, which is comparable with the previous ADC estimations of Rs. 4792 crores. However, BSNL has stated that it expect reduction in amount by Rs. 1254 crores.

It is difficult to assess the exact impact as traffic pattern is fast changing due to unprecedented subscriber growth.

As per information received from BSNL, Rs. 911.85 crores were outstanding as on 31.12.2004 on account of payment of Interconnection Usage Charge inclusive of ADC in 27 Telecom circles of BSNL.

Assets of VSNL

†*235. SHRI ISAM SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the assets of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. at present;

(b) the amount of money for which it had been sold to private players last year; and

(c) in what manner this loss to Government proposed to be compensated?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) As per the latest (18th Annual Report for the period 2003-04), the assets of VSNL as on 31/3/2004 are as follows:

SI. No.	Details of assets	(Rs. in thousands)
1	Fixed assets (net block)	19,743,640
2	Current assets	
2(a)	Inventories	24,091
2(b)	Sundry debtors	4,401,957
2(c)	Cash and bank balances	10,467,110
2(d)	Other current assets	857,687

† Original notice of the question was receded in Hindi.